

**Board of County Commissioners
Agenda Item Summary**

Meeting Date: June 16, 2004
Bulk Item: Yes ☐ No ☒

Division: Board of County Commissioners
Department: **George R. Neugent**

AGENDA ITEM WORDING:

Discussion by the Board of County Commissioners and necessary action to be taken to preserve and protect Teen Court from dissolution.

ITEM BACKGROUND:

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOCC ACTION:

CONTRACT/AGREEMENT CHANGES:

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

TOTAL COST:

BUDGETED: YES ☐ NO ☐

COST TO COUNTY: \$ NA

Source of Funds: _____

REVENUE PRODUCING: YES ☐ NO ☐ **AMT PER MONTH:** **YEAR:**

APPROVED BY: COUNTY ATTY ☐ OMB/PURCHASING ☐ RISK MANAGEMENT ☐

APPROVAL:

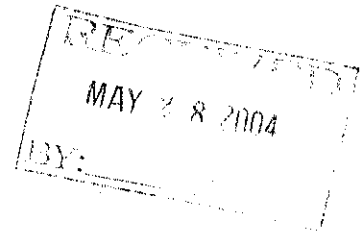
M for Neugent
Commissioner GEORGE R. NEUGENT
DISTRICT II

DOCUMENTATION: INCLUDED ☒ TO FOLLOW ☐ NOT REQUIRED ☐

DISPOSITION:

AGENDA ITEM # 07

Kirk C. Zuelch
3742 Donald Avenue
Key West, FL 33040



May 26, 2004

Commissioner George Neugent
25 Ships Way.
Big Pine Key, FL 33043

Dear Commissioner Neugent;


I was recently advised that our Teen Court diversion program will be closed on October 1, of this year due to lack of funding. I am shocked at the lack of foresight that our State Legislature has demonstrated by not supporting this program. As State Attorney, I started this program in 1998. It was saved by Sheriff Roth in 2001, when our current State Attorney abandoned existing juvenile programs that were established to help our kids. The Teen Court and Civil Citation programs have helped hundreds of children, and their families, who are actively involved with their children in the Teen Court process.

I implore the Commission to do what is necessary to save this program. I understand that the State Legislature enacted F.S. 939.185 which allows some court fees to be utilized for Juvenile programs if local Ordinances are enacted. I question whether only a portion of this fee will generate sufficient funding. I ask that you adopt the appropriate Ordinance and provide additional County funding, if necessary, to keep this program serving our children.

This program works! It works for the kids charged with their first criminal offense, by providing consequences without labeling these kids with the stigma of a juvenile conviction. It works for their families by involving them in the process, working together with dedicated counselors, their child and a teen peer group, all doing their best to have this first offense the child's last. It works for the teen volunteers who act as attorneys, clerks, bailiffs and jurors. These kids that serve as jurors actually give their peer his/her sentence. It works for adult volunteers who can participate in a program that touches kids today and most importantly preserves their future. It works for the Courts, the prosecutors and defense lawyers, the clerks and everyone involved in our justice system by diverting these cases to a program that is less costly and far more effective. It allows our formal court system to deal with the more severe cases.

I know you can find the money to support this program! It takes only some imagination and the will to make it happen. Please do it for our kids.

Sincerely,


Kirk C. Zuelch

cc: Jim Roberts, Monroe County Administrator
Richard Collins, Monroe County Attorney
Sheriff Rick Roth, Monroe County Sheriff